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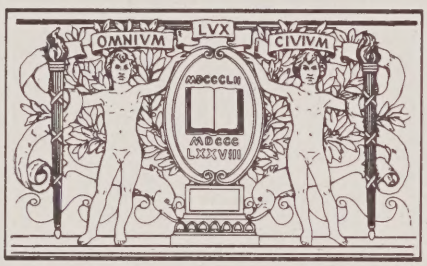

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Boston Housing Authority
Housing Occupancy, Rehabilitation, and Conversion Plans Update

Jane A. Van Buren

Boston Redevelopment Authority
Research Department

June 1985

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City of Boston

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The Boston Housing Authority was established in 1935 to take advantage of federal aid in the construction of low-rent public housing. Currently, the Authority operates 69* developments in Boston, with a total of 15,425 housing units. Out of that total, 12,967 are currently occupied and 2,458 are vacant and/or boarded up; 11,369 are designated family units and 4,058 are elderly. Within many of the elderly housing developments, units are specified for physically disable persons. Ten percent of Boston's population or close to 56,000 people live in housing that the Housing Authority either owns or oversees. In order to be eligible for admission to BHA developments, a family's income must fall below certain federally or locally set maximums. At the present time, income units range from up to $18,100 for a family of one to up to $32,300 for a family of eight.

Housing developments in Boston are located in every neighborhood with the exception of Back Bay, Beacon Hill and Downtown. The majority of family units are concentrated in Jamaica Plain/Mission Hill and South Boston. The majority of elderly units are concentrated in Dorchester and the South End.

The mean year of initial occupancy for all the developments is 1964. The first development to be occupied was the Mary E. McCormack in South Boston in 1938, and the last new construction occurred in 1982. Ten developments out of the total 69 are either currently undergoing renovation or will be over the next five years. Due to the uncertainty of the federal financing scheme it is possible that additional units

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* When counting Rutland, E. Springfield and Franklin Field Elderly as separate developments.

will receive renovations by 1990, or that currently scheduled plans will be postponed.

Both the federal and state governments are involved in the financing of BHA developments. The federal government is responsible for 81 percent of all Boston developments and the Commonwealth for the remaining 19 percent. In each development, the government involved is responsible for assuming costs relating to building construction and development, as well as for paying off the principal and interest on the buildings over a predetermined period of time, usually many years. Operating expenditures including purchasing, personnel and maintenance costs, are paid by the Authority out of a combination of income from tenant rents and federal or state operating subsidy funds. Renovations are paid for out of a combination of the above monies, and by grants received from the government involved.

In 1982 a major redevelopment effort involving $82 million in federal and state funds was initiated in three state family units, Broadway, Commonwealth and Franklin Field. Renovations continue at present, with anticipated completion dates of 1985 and 1986. In addition, in 1980-81, HUD obligated approximately $25 million in conventional modernization funds to the BHA. These funds have been used for physical improvements and renovations throughout the 69 developments, including a $6.7 million appropriation specifically designated for apartment renovation work.

The Boston House Authority was ordered into receivership in 1980 by Massachusetts Superior Court Judge Paul G. Garrity. This action followed an extended tenant-initiated class action litigation in which tenants complained of poor repairs and poor management. The BHA is the

only housing authority in the country ever to be placed into receivership. As a result, renovation, rehabilitation, and increased safety became primary goals in the period 1980-1984. A two-year stabilization program, aimed at improving security and physical conditions through repair and the securing of vacant lots was also undertaken in 1980. In addition, the Authority used $2.2 million of CDBG funds in 1981-82 to initiate a Public Safety Program aimed at reducing crime and improving resident safety in the developments. The Boston Police Department created a Special Housing Unit to work in conjunction with this program.

In the fall of 1984, Judge Garrity returned responsibility for the BHA to the city because of "the confidence I feel in the Flynn Administration." Mayor Flynn appointed Doris Bunte, then a State representative from Roxbury, to serve as Administrator of the BHA. A new nine-member board has been created with public housing tenants filling five of the nine seats.

BOSTON HOUSING AUTHORITY
SUMMARY TABLE

	Total Boston	East Boston	Charlestown	South Boston	North End/ Waterfront	Back Bay/ Beacon Hill	South End
Total # Family Units by Neighborhood	11,369	771	1,120	2,545	0	0	653
% of Family Units by Neighborhood	74%	80%	92%	91%	0	0	55%
Total # Elderly Units by Neighborhood	4,058	181	96	248	100	134	540
% of Elderly Units by Neighborhood	26%	20%	8%	9%	100%	100%	45%
Total # of Units by Neighborhood	15,427	952	1,216	2,793	100	134	1,193
% of City Total		6%	8%	18%	1%	1%	8%
% Federal	81%	67%	100%	67%	100%	100%	100%
% State	19%	33%	0	33%	0	0	0
Mean Year of Initial Occupancy	1964	1956	1941	1956	1977	1973	1971
# of Occupied Units	12,967	890	965	2,654	100	130	998
% of City Total		7%	7%	20%	1%	1%	8%
% Occupied	84%	92%	79%	95%	100%	97%	84%
# of Vacant and/or Boarded-Up Units	2,458	62	251	139	0	4	195
% of City Total		3%	10%	6%	0	.2%	8%
% Vacant	16%	8%	21%	5%	0	3%	16%
Total # of Developments	69	3	2	6	1	1	8
% of City Total		4%	3%	9%	1%	1%	12%
# With Rehab Plans	14 (20%)	1 (Orient Heights)	1 (Charlestown)	1 (Broadway (D Street))	0	0	1 (Cathedral)

BOSTON HOUSING AUTHORITY
SUMMARY TABLE

	Brighton	Jam. Pl./ Mission Hill	Roxbury	Dorchester	Mattapan	Roslindale	West Roxbury	Hyde Park
Total # Family Units by Neighborhood	535	2,651	1,382	996	0	514	0	202
% of Family Units by Neighborhood	52%	89%	79%	52%	0	75%	0	44%
Total # Elderly Units by Neighborhood	486	341	358	914	64	167	176	253
% of Elderly Units by Neighborhood	48%	11%	21%	48%	100%	25%	100%	56%
Total # of Units by Neighborhood	1,021	2,990	1,740	1,910	64	681	176	455
% of City Total	7%	19%	11%	12%	.5%	4%	1%	3%
% Federal	60%	88%	90%	79%	100%	67%	100%	50%
% State	40%	12%	10%	21%	0	33%	0	50%
Mean Year of Initial Occupancy	1962	1955	1961	1974	1972	1960	1975	1970
# of Occupied Units	811	1,771	1,607	1,728	64	632	176	441
% of City Total	6%	14%	12%	13%	.5%	5%	1%	3%
% Occupied	79%	59%	92%	90%	100%	93%	100%	97%
# of Vacant and/or Boarded-Up Units	210	1,219	133	182	0	49	0	14
% of City Total	9%	50%	5%	7%	0	2%	0	.5%
% Vacant	21%	41%	8%	10%	0	7%	0	3%
Total # of Developments	5	8	10	14	1	3	2	4
% of City Total	7%	12%	15%	20%	1%	4%	3%	6%
# With Rehab Plans	1 (Fidelis Way)	5 (Heath St., Mission Hill)	1 (Orchard Park)	2 (Franklin Hill, Franklin Field)	0	1 (Archdale)	0	0

BOSTON HOUSING AUTHORITY
PUBLIC HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS
June 1985

Development	Neighborhood	Number of Family Units	Number of Elderly Units	Financing Scheme	Year Initially Occupied	Number of Occupied Units	Number of Vacant Units	Comments
Maverick	East Boston	414	0	Federal	1942	414	0	No renovation planned
Orient Heights	East Boston	354	0	State	1952	275	62	Renov. of vacant units planned
Heritage	East Boston	20	181	Federal	1975	201	0	No renovation planned
Charlestown	Charlestown	1,120	0	Federal	1940	869	251	Ongoing renovation of 177 units
General Warren	Charlestown	0	96	Federal	1972	96	0	No renovation planned
Mary E. McCormack	South Boston	1,015	0	Federal	1938	1,015	0	No renovation planned
Old Colony	South Boston	854	0	Federal	1940	854	0	No renovation planned
Broadway (D Street)	South Boston	676	0	State	1949	536	139	Ongoing renov. of vacant units
Bayview (Foley)	South Boston	0	96	Federal	1963	96	0	No renovation planned
West 9th Street	South Boston	0	84	Federal	1968	84	0	No renovation planned
Peninsula Apts (Msgr. Powers)	South Boston	0	68	State	1978	68	0	No renovation planned
Ansonia Apts.	No. End/Waterfront	0	100	Federal	1977	100	0	No renovation planned
St. Botolph St.	South End	0	134	Federal	1973	130	4	No renovation planned
Cathedral	South End	503	0	Federal	1951	340	163	Partial turnkey renov. proposed
Castle Square	South End	0	102	Federal	1968	102	0	No renovation planned
Frederick Douglas	South End	0	78	Federal	1973	71	7	No renovation planned
Washington Manor	South End	0	78	Federal	1973	72	6	No renovation planned
Hampton House	South End	0	78	Federal	1973	70	8	No renovation planned
Torre Unidad	South End	0	204	Federal	1974	198	6	No renovation planned
W. Newton Street	South End	136	0	Federal	1973	145	5	No renovation planned
Rutland-E. Springfield	South End	14	0	Federal	1982			
Commonwealth-Fidelis Way	Brighton	277	115	State	1951	189	203	Ongoing renovation of vacant elderly and family units
Faneuil	Brighton	258	0	State	1950	258	0	No renovation planned
Washington St.	Brighton	0	82	Federal	1963	75	7	No renovation planned
J.J. Carroll(Chestnut)	Brighton	0	64	Federal	1966	64	0	No renovation planned
P.H. White (Corey Rd.)	Brighton	0	225	Federal	1978	225	0	No renovation planned

Development	Neighborhood	Number of Family Units	Number of Elderly Units	Financing Scheme	Year Initially Occupied	Number of Occupied Units	Number of Vacant Units	Comments
Heath Street	Jamaica Plain			Federal	1942			
Bromley Heath	Jamaica Plain	1,020	64	Federal	1954	624	460	Ongoing partial turnkey renov.
Bickford Street	Jamaica Plain			Federal	1962			
Jamaica Pond	Jamaica Plain	0	44	Federal	1962	44	0	No renovation planned
South Street	Jamaica Plain	132	0	State	1953	132	0	No renovation planned
Armory Street	Jamaica Plain	0	233	Federal	1973	213	20	No renovation planned
Mission Hill	J.P./Mission Hill	917	0	Federal	1940	471	446	Scattered site renovations
Mission Hill Ext.	J.P./Mission Hill	580	0	Federal	1952	287	293	Partial turnkey renovation
Orchard Park	Roxbury	727	0	Federal	1942	617	110	Ongoing renovation-completed 1985-total units will be 719
Whittier St.	Roxbury	199	0	Federal	1953	197	2	No renovation planned
Lenox St.	Roxbury	304	0	Federal	1940	300	4	No renovation planned
Camden St.	Roxbury	72	0	State	1949	72	0	No renovation planned
Infill	Roxbury	26	0	Federal	1971	26	0	No renovation planned
Infill	Roxbury	28	0	Federal	1972	28	0	No renovation planned
Highland Park	Roxbury	26	0	Federal	1982	26	0	No renovation planned
Elm Hill (Holgate)	Rox./No. Dorchester	0	86	Federal	1962	86	0	No renovation planned
Warren Towers	Rox./No. Dorchester	0	104	Federal	1969	102	2	No renovation planned
Walnut Park	Rox./No. Dorchester	0	168	Federal	1970	153	15	No renovation planned
Columbia Point	N. Dorchester	1,504	0	Federal	1954	400	1,104	Not included in total
Annapolis	N. Dorchester	0	56	Federal	1962	53	3	No renovation planned
Peter Pasciucco Apts	N. Dorchester	0	96	Federal	1973	86	10	No renovation planned
Bellflower Dorset	N. Dorchester	0	114	Federal	1981	114	0	No renovation planned
Franklin Hill Ave.	S. Dorchester	375	0	Federal	1952	375	0	Ongoing renovation-375 units by 8/85
Ashmont	S. Dorchester	0	54	Federal	1962	54	0	No renovation planned
Melville (J.J. Meade)	S. Dorchester	0	40	Federal	1969	40	0	No renovation planned
Franklin Field	S. Dorchester	368	0	State	1954	199	169	Major renovation ongoing to be completed late 1985
Franklin Field Elderly	S. Dorchester	0	80	State	1962	80	0	
Ames St.	S. Dorchester	0	80	Federal	1963	80	0	No renovation planned
Codman	S. Dorchester	0	108	Federal	1972	108	0	No renovation planned
Evans St.	S. Dorchester	2	0	Federal	1973	2	0	No renovation planned
Lower Mills	S. Dorchester	0	183	Federal	1972	183	0	No renovation planned
Gallivan Blvd	S. Dorchester	251	0	State	1953	251	0	No renovation planned
Peabody Square	S. Dorchester	0	103	Federal	1982	103	0	No renovation planned

Development	Neighborhood	Number of Family Units	Number of Elderly Units	Financing Scheme	Year Initially Occupied	Number of Occupied Units	Number of Vacant Units	Comments
Groveland	Mattapan	0	64	Federal	1972	64	0	No renovation planned
Washington/Beech	Roslindale	226	48	Federal	1952	263	11	No renovation planned
Archdale	Roslindale	288	0	State	1951	250	38	Renovation of vacant units
Roslyn Apts. (Cliffmont)	Roslindale	0	119	Federal	1977	119	0	No renovation planned
Rockland	W. Roxbury	0	72	Federal	1972	72	0	No renovation planned
Spring Street	W. Roxbury	0	104	Federal	1977	104	0	No renovation planned
Fairmount	Hyde Park	202	0	State	1951	200	2	No renovation planned
Riverside/Davidson	Hyde Park	0	48	Federal	1972	48	0	No renovation planned
Hassan Apts	Hyde Park	0	100	Federal	1974	92	8	No renovation planned
Summer Street	Hyde Park	0	105	State	1981	101	4	No renovation planned

Source: Boston Housing Authority Planning Department. Prepared by Jane A. Van Buren, BRA Research Department, May 1985.